

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT,  
EMPOWERED CITY COUNCIL ACT**

**WHEREAS**, to ensure a separation of powers, the City of Bridgeport is made up of two separate branches of government: the legislative, City Council, and the executive, the Office of the Mayor; and

**WHEREAS**, to ensure the government is effective and citizens' rights are protected, each branch has its own powers and responsibilities, including working with the other branches; and

**WHEREAS**, our local government is structured this way to prevent one branch of government from becoming too powerful, and to create a system of checks and balances; and

**WHEREAS**, we remain steadfast in charting a new course for our city grounded in a vision for a beloved Bridgeport built on the principles of good governance, justice, equity, and democracy, in order to re-establish mutual respect with the people of Bridgeport to foster healthy community and diverse civic engagement; and

**WHEREAS**, we define good governance as the process for making and implementing decisions on behalf of the public trust; that is accountable, transparent, follows the rule of law, is responsive, equitable and inclusive, efficient and effective, and participatory; and builds trust, honesty, and a collective vision for a people united by common law; and

**WHEREAS**, the operation of good governance requires that we have co-equal branches of government so that one branch cannot dominate and control the other; and

**WHEREAS**, we desire to establish as a position of the City of Bridgeport that in order for our City Council to effectively govern on behalf of the public trust, our legislative branch must be given the resources it needs to draft ordinances, research policy positions, interpret legal documents and contracts, analyze complex financial statements, engage in constituent services, and clearly communicate with the public; and

**WHEREAS**, as proposed in The People's Platform, that we empower the legislative branch of our local government by passing the following ordinances and appropriating the funds to staff City Council; and

**WHEREAS**, all 20 members of City Council serve on an unpaid, volunteer basis without any support staff of its own; and, the executive branch is staffed with and supported by many salaried positions and department heads, which makes it stronger than the legislative branch; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that it is the position of the City of Bridgeport, Legislative Aides who can support City Council on duties including but not limited to policy research, communication with the public and with other Council members, tracking legislation, administrative tasks, and constituent services; Legislative & Legal Counsel who can support City Council on duties including but not limited to analyzing legal documents and contracts, authoring legal opinions, drafting resolutions and ordinances, and serving as parliamentarian; and a Budget Director who can support City Council and the Budget & Appropriations Committee on duties including but not limited to analyzing complex financial documents, tracking ongoing municipal spending, analyzing budgets across time, and directing the budgetary process; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City of Bridgeport to reform our City Charter to address structural issues related to good governance and democracy, and calls on the City Council to study the City Charter to identify the areas of the Charter that require revision through a Charter Reform process; and

**BE IT ORDAINED:** By the City Council of the City of Bridgeport that the Bridgeport Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2.06 - Common Council, is hereby amended to amend Section 2.06.070 – Office of legislative services and add the following new Sections 2.06.080 and 2.06.090:

**2.06.070 - Office of legislative services.**

- A. There is hereby established an Office of Legislative Services, which shall be non-partisan and shall assist the members of the City Council in the performance of their official duties.
- B. The Office of Legislative Services shall have its own budget for resources which may be deemed necessary to the proper and effective functioning of the City Council and the Office of Legislative Services.
- C. This section shall in no way amend or usurp the duties of the Office of the City Clerk established by the Charter of the City of Bridgeport or the Code of Ordinances to serve the City Council and its committees.
- D. The City of Bridgeport's Civil Service Personnel Director, Labor Relations Director, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), City Attorney and all other appropriate city staff shall advise and assist the City Council in identifying existing positions in the City's Civil Service table of organization and/or creating new Civil Service positions and associated job descriptions pursuant to the City Charter authority of the Civil Service Commission and the City Council in order to staff the non-partisan Office of Legislative Services to assist the members of the Council in the performance of their official duties.
- E. The staff of the Office of Legislative Services shall be supervised and directed by a Special Project Coordinator.

- G. Pursuant to the Charter of the City of Bridgeport, Chapter 17, Sections 205 and 205.1, the positions in the Office of Legislative Services shall be allocated to the City's classified civil service; and due to the confidential nature of such positions shall be allocated as appropriate to the City's unaffiliated workforce (see Code of Ordinances Sec. 2.36.010)

(Ord. dated 4/20/20)

**2.06.080 - Legislative Liaison for the City Council.**

(A) The Council shall have the power to appropriate sufficient funds to appoint up to 5 legislative liaisons to the City Council.

(B) Subject to appropriation and availability of funds, the Legislative Liaisons in the Office of Legislative Services shall be filled in accordance with selection procedures in accordance with the Civil Service provisions of the City Charter (Chapter 17), as well as the Bridgeport Code of Ordinances, Civil Service Rules and Regulations, applicable collective bargaining units, and all governing federal and state laws.

**2.06.090 - Legislative and Legal Counsel to the City Council.**

(A) The City Council shall appropriate a sufficient budget to fund outside counsel to advise members of the City Council on City matters when requested.

(B) When the interests of the City Council require and provided that funds are available for such purpose, the City Council by resolution shall request necessary outside legal counsel, in accordance with the provisions of the City Charter.

(C) A request by resolution can be made for such outside counsel at any time for any reason on any issue or issues related to city matters when in the opinion of a present majority of the council, it is necessary for the City Council to obtain legal advice outside the city attorney's office.

APPROVED BY THE  
BRIDGEPORT CITY  
COUNCIL ON:  
APRIL 18, 2022

APPROVED BY MAYOR  
JOSEPH P. GANIM  
ON:  
APRIL 18, 2022

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